

Quality Counts for Kids Task Force Meeting

August 18, 2004

Task Force Members Attendance: Task Force Chair: Ann Terrell-Milwaukee Affiliate, NBCDI Board of Directors, Mary Babula-Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, Gershia Coggs-Child Care Providers Helper, Shelley Cousin-Wisconsin Head Start Association, Dave Edie-UW-Extension Wisconsin Child Care Research Partnership, Lisa Furseth-Wisconsin Community Action Program, Tammy Hammell-Knowledge Learning Corporation, Dana Harmel-Wisconsin Family Child Care Association Representative, Jane Ilgen-Wisconsin Child Care Improvement Project, Laura Klingelhoets-Wisconsin Child Care Administrators Association Representative, Sandy Leibfried-Southwest Wisconsin CCR&R, Joyce Mallory-Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, Jose Martinez-United Migrant Opportunity Services, Inc., Carol Maurer-4C Community Coordinated Child Care, M. Judy Mays-Dusk 2 Dawn Child Care, Mary Motquin-Intertribal Child Care Council, Mike Poma-Milwaukee County Department of Human Services, Jane Robinson-The Registry, Barb Schuler-Wisconsin Technical College System Office, Kari Stroede-Satellite Family Child Care, Lisa Turnbull- Sawyer County Department of Human Services

Task Force Staff Attendance: Laura Saterfield-Department of Workforce Development, Child Care Section Chief, DWD Staff: Alan Sweet, Kath McGurk, Linda Leonhart, Jane Penner-Hoppe, Department of Health and Family Services Staff: Anne Carmody, Jill Chase, Julia Strong, Department of Administration Staff: Erin Fath, Department of Public Instruction Staff: Jill Haglund

Task Force Early Childhood Community Experts: Pam Boulton-UW Milwaukee, Christine Breunig, and Carrie Volenberg-Community Coordinated Child Care, Inc., Susan Tragesser – Planning Council for Health and Human Services, Inc., Mary Roach and Jason Bierbrauer-UW-Extension Research Partnership

Task Force Visitors: Josh Abrahams, Beverly Anderson, Michelle Bethke, Gabe Blood, Susan Bohn, Rebecca Brueggeman, Colleen Cantlon, Connie Colussy, Dorothy Conniff, Sonya Coster, Pat Hernandez, Jolene Ibeling, Rhonda Mitchell, Judy Olson, Carmen Rivers, Leticia Smith-Evans, Patrick Steliga, Pirkko Zweifel

Call to Order

Ann Terrell, Chair of the *Quality Counts for Kids* Task Force called the meeting to order. Introductions were made. Ann asked for a review of the meeting minutes from the August 2, 2004 Task Force Meeting. Mary Babula moved and Tammy Hammell seconded that the minutes of the meeting be approved. Motion passed.

Ann provided a brief review of the Task Force ground rules and reviewed the Task Force charge as indicated by Governor Doyle: "To help develop a rating system that will give child care providers incentives to go above and beyond the basic standards of quality". Additionally, Ann provided Task Force Members with the anticipated Timeline for the development of recommendations and a final report to the Governor by December 2004.

Ann asked Task Force Members if they had any questions about the process of developing the recommendation? Task Force members did not indicate any questions or comments. Ann encouraged Task Force Members to move forward in the development of a single recommendation for a realistic model of a Quality Rating System that can be embraced by child care programs, parents and state government.

Task Force Members received two separate comments/ alternatives to the components of a Quality Rating System from separate Milwaukee groups that contacted local area Task Force Members (Mike Poma and Tammy Hammell) to share with the full Task Force. This information was shared with Task Force Members, but Mike or Tammy did not make additional comment. It was determined that Task Force Staff will collect this information and include with other Public comment received.

Regulatory Compliance

Jill Chase provided an update on the research that the Department of Health and Family Services, Bureau of Regulation and Licensing has done on licensing regulatory compliance. Currently Wisconsin does not have a working definition of "Regulatory Compliance".

In a review of Oklahoma, Texas and North Carolina, the following procedures have been used to develop individual state compliance criteria:

- Oklahoma – Uses three categories: The number of violations, serious violations, and repeat violations.
- Texas- Uses three categories: The number of violations, serious violations, and the number of repeat violations.
- North Carolina- Uses a point system. Points are awarded, and demerit points are awarded.

As the Bureau of Regulation and Licensing (BRL) develops regulatory compliance language, the collection of information will be a factor. What information is easier to capture and to document and collect in an automated approach will be reviewed. Regulatory compliance criteria will be developed which will satisfy the criteria of being valid, realistic, simple and efficient. BRL will develop language to define "serious" and "repeat" violations. Input for the development of this language will be accepted from Task Force Members. Jill encourages the Task Force Members to send information via email. BRL will also work with other child care agencies/organizations to develop language.

Task Force Members discussed further compliance issues, and serious violations. Jill provided information on "out of compliance" determinations, "enforcement actions", and "corrective action plans". Members discussed the desire to build a quality rating system that would recognize programs that demonstrate regulatory compliance. Questions were identified regarding high quality programs that "make a mistake", and immediately develop corrective action plans-how will their quality status rating be affected?

Certification regulatory compliance language will also need to be developed.

Sandy Leibfried moved that DHFS/BRL and certification develop jointly if possible, regulatory compliance language. Mary Motquin seconded the motion. Draft language shall be shared at the September Task Force Meeting. Motion passed.

The Registry Presentation

Jane Robinson presented a PowerPoint on The Registry. The presentation provided the Task Force Members with information on the business of The Registry. The National Registry Alliance, staffed by The Registry in Wisconsin was also highlighted.

- 28 States currently are active participants in the National Registry Alliance.
- 23 States have a Registry system.
- 2 States utilize a Registry system regionally.
- 5 States are currently implementing a Registry system.

The Registry has four full time staff and seven part time staff, including one limited term employee. The Registry is currently working on additional professional development opportunities through the design of several new credentials, including a Preschool credential and Montessori credential.

The Registry currently produces approximately 300 certificates each week. The Registry is approaching 30,000 individuals within the career recognition system. The Registry verifies the validity of all educational transcripts and assures accuracy of information before the certificate of recognition is awarded.

The Registry is a partner in the Research Partnership and Data Capacity grants that include partnerships with DWD, DHFS, the Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies and Network, and the UW Extension. It is estimated that 50 percent of the child care workforce has already received a Registry Certificate.

Through a contract with Milwaukee County Human Services Department, certified and licensed family child care providers in Milwaukee have applied for and received Registry Certificates paid for by the county.

The Registry is currently reviewing the components of the Registry Certificate. Focus groups have been held across the state, and The Registry staff has met with other early care and education agencies and organizations. The goal of the working groups is to develop and establish a Registry Certificate that clearly identifies individual credit based education completed, additional training hours completed, years of experience, professional development opportunities and other quality criteria that reflects individual accomplishment. Jane also expressed The Registry's commitment to ensuring that the new certificate and the system behind it will be consistent with the directions and outcomes of the KidsFirst Task Force.

Option 5 – Hybrid Model Revisions

Laura Saterfield provided the Task Force Members with an overview of the revisions made to the Hybrid Quality Indicators Rating Scale, hereafter referred to as – Option 5. The first two tiers of this model are in a block format. Tiers three through five are achieved by points earned in the following components: Teacher Qualifications, Director Qualifications, Learning Environment/Curriculum, and Business Practices.

Tier 1 = licensed program

Tier 2 = regulatory compliance

Tier 3 = 5-12 points

Tier 4 = 13-20 points

Tier 5 = 21-26 points

Discussion by Task Force Members on how providers move up the tiers. At the August 2, 2004 Task Force meeting a motion was approved that it was a requirement for programs to be in existence for one full year prior to movement up the rating scale. Mary Babula moved this motion for reconsideration. Jane Ilgen seconded the motion for reconsideration.

Discussion included information from BRL that licensing already has in place a probationary license requirement. Discussion of a BRL year 2000 report that indicated that almost 50 percent of all child care program closings are within the first year of operation.

Dave Edie moved that this issue of one year of operation be tabled until the tiered reimbursement proposal was reviewed. Mary Babula seconded. Motion to table the issue carried.

“Quality Counts for Kids” Discussion

Task Force Members discussed the vision for the recommendation to the Governor's Office. Two ideas came out:

- 1.) The goal of developing a Quality Rating System that will support and promote high quality early learning experiences for all children. Using national research, and building upon the current child care system infrastructure in Wisconsin, quality indicators will be observed and assessed in all regulated child care programs, and only those programs that meet specific quality criteria will receive quality ratings, and become eligible for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy. Programs that do not meet quality rating criteria will no longer be able to provide care. Increased public and private investment and public demand for child care quality is necessary to make this a reality.
- 2.) The goal of developing a Quality Rating System that will support and promote high quality early learning experiences for all children. Using national research, and building upon the current child care system infrastructure in Wisconsin, quality indicators will be observed and assessed in all regulated child care programs. All programs will be included in the quality rating system, but only those that demonstrate higher quality as based on specific criteria will receive higher ratings.

Task Force Members continue to strive to develop a quality rating system that will encourage programs to be motivated to move up to higher tiers of quality.

Voluntary vs. Mandatory Participation Discussion

Task Force Members discussed pros and cons of voluntary participation in the Quality Rating System. Task Force Members strongly felt that participation in the quality rating system should be a requirement in order for a program to receive Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy. Concern was voiced that if the program is voluntary, rural child care programs that do not serve low income children will not participate. Discussion on incentives to programs to participate took place. Parent support and demand for high quality is the key to encourage child care program involvement.

- Consensus was reached that the Quality Rating System will be “inclusive” of all regulated child care programs.

Teacher Training

Task Force Members discussed research findings on teacher qualifications. Research indicates that child care teachers who have a bachelors degree (including bachelors degrees that are unrelated to child care) and associate degrees in related early childhood generally provide higher quality experiences for children than those teachers who do not have a degrees. Research shows evidence that there is strong correlation between higher teacher education qualifications and higher quality of child care programming as found through observation using environmental rating scores.

Quality Rating Principles

- Quality Rating Principles have been identified and agreed to by Task Force Members.

Quality rating principles will provide a framework for the development of the Wisconsin quality rating system. While the vision for the highest quality child care programming available and accessibility for all children is the goal, the quality rating system must begin by looking at where providers are now. Wisconsin must develop a structure and mechanism that will encourage programs to improve their own quality by setting a floor for child care programming that provides safe and developmentally appropriate early learning experiences. The quality rating principles will be used to guide decisions in the development of a quality rating scale and tiered reimbursement system that will promote quality for all child care programs.

Tiered Reimbursement System Presentation

Susan Tragesser from the Planning Council for Health and Human Services, Inc., provided a PowerPoint presentation on “Making Decisions About a Child Care Tiered Reimbursement System”. Susan provided background information on tiered reimbursement structures used by other states. Differential schemes were identified, and national research that supports tiered reimbursement structures to encourage programs to move towards higher quality was included.

Susan provided separate options to balance funding utilizing a five tier quality rating scale. Within all options presented, the current maximum reimbursement rate was identified, and quality indicator rating tiers were compared to the current maximum reimbursement rate. In all options, the tier one payment rate was below the current maximum reimbursement rate. This serves as an incentive to all programs to exceed current entry level regulatory requirements, and provides an opportunity for higher payment rates based on increased quality.

Susan identified the component questions necessary to establish a tiered reimbursement rate structure for Wisconsin that will balance the funding available:

- What number of providers will be at each individual quality rating level?
- What number of children will be served at each quality rating level?
- What amount of subsidy funding will be available?

The tiered reimbursement structure will be further discussed at the September 13, 2004 Task Force meeting.

Future Meeting Dates

The following meetings have been scheduled:

Monday, September 13, 2004	1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Waukesha Discussion and decision on tiered reimbursement model Review of DHFS/BRL "Regulatory Compliance" Language
Monday, September 20, 2004	10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Draft Report Reviewed
Public Hearing Dates	LaCrosse Milwaukee Wausau	Friday, October 15, 2004 Wednesday, October 20, 2004 Tuesday, October 26, 2004
Monday, November 15, 2004	10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Review Public Hearing Comments
Monday, December 6, 2004	10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Final Recommendation for the Governor

Task Force Meeting Minutes 8 18 04
Kath McGurk
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